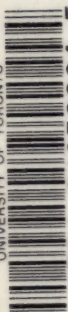


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*Isabel Mearns Crawford*



Barney



Makers of Canadian Literature  
ISABELLA VALANCY CRAWFORD



*LIBRARY EDITION*

# Makers of Canadian Literature

Lorne Albert Pierce  
Editor

Victor Morin  
Associate Editor  
French Section

Dedicated to the writers of  
Canada - past and present -  
the real Master-builders and  
Interpreters of our great  
Dominion - in the hope that  
our People, equal heirs in  
the rich inheritance, may learn  
to know them intimately; and  
knowing them love them; and  
loving - follow

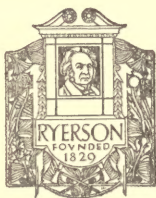




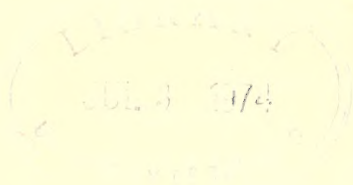
# ISABELLA VALANCY CRAWFORD

*by*

KATHERINE HALE  
(Mrs. John Garvin)



TORONTO  
THE RYERSON PRESS



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Isabella Nancy Crawford

# BIOGRAPHICAL





## ISABELLA VALANCY CRAWFORD



FLAMING but solitary figure, singing through the sombre Ontario of the 70's and 80's of the last century strange and brilliant songs. The songs were alien to the day and place in which they were sung. It was as though a vendor of foreign fruits were, by some trick of fate, set down to sell his wares in bazaars whose crowds were too unsophisticated to recognize their flavours.

It is perhaps inevitable that what the Irish call a "trouble" should exist between the mystical and the actual life of every artist. In the case of Isabella Valancy Crawford this conflict began generations before her day, for she was of the fatal Celtic origin that gathers trouble to itself as naturally as it gathers joy.

The Crawfords were of Highland, and later of Irish, descent, and it was in Dublin, on Christmas Day, 1850, that there was born to Sydney Scott, and Stephen Dennis Crawford,

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her husband, a daughter, whom they named for a maternal relative, Isabella Valancy. Dr. Crawford was a man of wide experience and literary culture. There was much to claim his interest and affection in sophisticated Dublin, but the tales of wealth in British North America were fabulous, and his family was large, and the children were delicate. In 1858 they migrated to Canada, and, of all places, to a little Ontario village just emerging from the bush, the village of Paisley upon the Saugeen River. Here, instead of golden guineas, ordinary farm produce was exchanged for medical service, and there was hardship for them all. But from the first the family lived true to its traditions, and even yet in Paisley one may hear echoes of the Crawfords' dignified hospitality.

For six years this village existence was continued, formative years of a child's life. The Crawfords were unlike the other young people of the settlement. The girls were not sent to the public school, but were carefully grounded in Latin and English by their parents, and in French, which they spoke fluently. Isabella Valancy was especially fond of reading, and attached to the kind of books that no young

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girl in an Ontario village in the early sixties had studied—translations of Horace and of Dante, for instance. But to offset all this education there was the splendid and primitive drama of the bush going on around them; the rush of its streams, the life of its trees, their death, too, as they fell crashing in the forest under the woodsman's axe. Even more than her sisters did Isabella love the forest; it was her mightiest book, and she possessed a vigorous young body which nature loved and called. Nature was unkind to the others. There were twelve children when they came to Paisley, and only three when, eight years later, the family removed to Lakefield.

Their fatal love of beauty irresistibly drew the family to a romantic rather than a prosperous village. Lakefield, on the borderland of the Kawartha Lakes district was, and is, picturesque. Of its early pioneer life Susanna Moodie and her sister, Catherine Parr Trail, have written fascinating stories. When the Crawfords arrived it was something of a place. Paisley was Scotch and the Kirk predominated. Lakefield was English and here, in the now unused Christ Church, Isabella was confirmed. There were several old English families living

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in or near the village and hence congenial society.

But it was the lakes that lured the poet. The Kawarthas have been likened to a miniature Muskoka, but are far more nearly akin to certain Scottish lakes, with their clear blue waters and many islands accentuated in beauty by the hills of the shore line which cast across the water a wild charm, and on which one may watch the play of sun and shadow all day. There were no summer cottages, but Lake-field families then, as in the earlier days of the Moodies, used to take canoes and camping supplies up the lakes. Stony Lake, near Burleigh Falls, has always been loved by the Indians, many of whom were living on its shores when Isabella Valancy Crawford spent her summers there.

It seems, through what may be gathered from the few survivors who still remember her, and the still scantier records of her history, that these were enchanted days in the brief life of the poet. They were tip-toe days of youth. In spite of her natural reserve, and a sort of bitter pride that was the heritage of her birth and her poverty, when she did join the village doings and the merry-makings of

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the young people, a Lakefield contemporary (and I here quote from an article written to the *Globe*, of Toronto, in 1905 by Maud Miller Wilson) recalls the fact that she became the life of the party, "electrifying us with her flashes of fun and repartee."

But the father was elderly, the son a mere lad, the Canadian promise of affluence still unfulfilled and so another move was made. This time to Peterborough, then a thriving town. Dr. Crawford took a house which was one of a row of several facing on the market square, at that time the centre of the town's activities. The front windows looked on shops and busy stalls where week after week the farmers came in to sell their produce. But the back windows looked on beauty—on the rushing Otonabee River, silver-stiff in winter, and in summer the channel for great drives of logs sent through to Lake Ontario from the timber stretches of the North. And in this house the young woman, who for years had been studying and experimenting in verse forms, now set herself deliberately to take stock of her resources. There was need to plan her future, for even in a larger field Dr. Crawford's practice was not adequate to their actual needs.

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Paisley had taught her the woods and the spirit of the pioneers, and Lakefield had shown her northern lakes and Indian life. "Malcolm's Katie," that long-sustained narrative of farm life and western woods, a magnificent poem, at first sight dwarfed of its stature by a foolish name, was thought out and written here, and so was the famous western cowboy poem, "Old Spookses' Pass," a gorgeous living, moving thing carried through with a man's touch and a man's imagery, again pathetically marred by its name and an attempt to make the glowing lines popular by an Americanized cowboy jargon. She tried to anticipate her audience. Financial success was necessary, and her hope lay in a compelling theme. Everyone was talking of the Northwest, the great new country just then coming out of its solitude. The young poet had never been west of Ontario, but she listened to travellers' tales and her vivid imagination caught fire. Her account of a stampede of cattle in "Old Spookses' Pass" is still considered a remarkable *tour de force* from a realistic as well as a poetic standpoint.

At this time she attacked also the writing of short stories, and was almost instantly success-

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ful. Her work was accepted by Frank Leslie's and other American magazines. But the payment was so small that even the discount on American money, then fifteen per cent., was a sad loss. An editorial in *Varsity*, of Toronto, January 23rd, 1886, on the subject of "the encouragement of native literature," contains one of the few comments to be found on the prose work: "The novel by Isabella Valancy Crawford in the *Globe* is vastly superior to the ordinary run of newspaper fiction." The concluding lines of the editorial are a naive comment on the attitude of the day. "We hope that Canadian editors will endeavour to do their best to encourage native talent. They should also pay for it."

On the death of Dr. Crawford the support of her mother and invalid sister devolved upon Isabella, the brother having left for the district of Algoma. They moved to a little roughcast cottage hidden behind lilac bushes on Brock Street. Two pathetic incidents stand out in this period. The delicate Emma Naomi, the younger sister, was always busy with beautiful and intricate designs in embroidery. On one piece she had worked for a year, and sent it, in hopes of a sale or a prize,



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to the Centennial Exhibition at Philadelphia. It was lost in the mails. At the same time it was announced that Isabella had won a six-hundred dollar prize in a short story competition. This meant financial salvation. But on the heels of the first cheque for a hundred dollars came the news that the prize-giving corporation had failed and nothing more was to be expected from them. It is not improbable that this double blow, so tragic for the two sisters, should have hastened the heart disease which afflicted Emma Naomi, as it had the other ill-fated children, for she died, leaving Isabella and her mother alone.

They left Peterborough and went to live in Toronto, taking lodgings over a grocery shop at the corner of King and John Streets, kept by Mrs. Charles J. Stuart, who was a sincere friend to the young poet and her mother. The two were very lonely. The spirit which in Peterborough had been too proud to admit visitors because there was "no fire in the drawing-room to keep them warm" was not that which beckons those friends and acquaintances who pass on the legend of one's work. Single-handed, Isabella fought her battle for recognition. She would take her poems to



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the *Globe* and the *Telegram* and sell them for little or nothing. They gleamed there for a day in their strange foreign beauty and were forgotten. She made them of subjects far and near, sometimes of roses in Madrid, sometimes of a little French laundress, washing out her clothes on the bank of a river that she had never seen, sometimes of Toronto in September, and once when the soldiers were returning after the Battle of Batouche, in 1885, she made a beautiful song of welcome for them, which appeared in the Toronto *Telegram*, and is called "The Rose of a Nation's Thanks."

There were no clubs and associations then to advise the public that it would be well to admire this work. There were, however, a few discerning critics and, oddly enough, the critics were with the poet.

Down the lane-like Jordan Street, in a certain dingy building, there was installed a brilliant journal called *The Week*, which existed for over a decade and became a decided literary influence. It was founded by Goldwin Smith, with Charles G. D. Roberts as its first editor. A study of the files shows such names as those of Archibald Lampman, Bliss Carman,

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W. W. Campbell and others equally well known to-day. It is interesting also that in these comparatively early days a woman editor was already in evidence, for we find that Mrs. J. W. F. Harrison (Seranus) was the musical, and then the literary, editor of *The Week*, and that Sara Jeanette Duncan was also an editor. It was at this time, while Mrs. Harrison was its literary editor, that a new writer climbed those dingy stairs. "A tall, dark young woman," says Mrs. Harrison, "one whom most people would feel was difficult, almost repellant in her manner. But her work charmed me, though I had to tell her," she declares, still regretful after all the years, "that we didn't pay for poetry."

Nevertheless, the friendship and support of a fellow-worker, herself a true poet, must have meant much to Miss Crawford. At this time she was launching on a perilous adventure, that of her first book. It was a cheaply-bound little paper volume, having for the name poem "Old Spookses' Pass." Its writer was forced to bear all expenses of publication, and the book, now one of the most eagerly sought volumes of the collector of Canadiana, never

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even paid for itself. It was Mrs. Harrison, chiefly, who called attention to this book in *The Week* and elsewhere.

Though the Canadian public ignored the work, in justice it must be said that this was not the case in England. The London *Athenæum* compared certain of the poems with the work of standard English poets; the *Spectator* referred to Miss Crawford's blank verse as "indeed of no ordinary kind—vigorous, powerful"; the *Illustrated London News* described her verse as "abounding in picturesque narration, glowing language and pathetic touches, combined with simple, impressive dignity"; the *Graphic* declared the humorous poems "equal to anything Colonel Hay had ever published," and characterized the book as "throughout a delightful one." Lord Dufferin, in a letter written to the poet from the British Embassy at Constantinople, says: "It is time now that Canada should have a literature of its own, and I am glad to think that you have so nobly shown the way."

Through the vivid recollections of two friends remarkable impressions have been given to the writer.

Mrs. A. J. Heffernan, formerly Miss Stuart,

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says: "I was a young girl at the time of her death, but how could I forget one like Miss Crawford! She seemed to me like a being from another planet. There was something about her that the world in general could not be expected to understand. She and her mother lived almost completely by themselves during the years that they lodged with us, except for one or two friends. But they had their own pursuits. They were deeply interested in English and European literature, and would speak French together constantly. Miss Crawford always liked me to practise my school-girl French with her. I used to watch her make her wonderful Irish potato cakes in our kitchen while she described the whole process to me in the language I was trying so hard to learn. I think she was really gay at heart, but at times seemed sad and depressed. Her passion for music was almost as great as her love for books and poetry. She studied the piano and played very well indeed, collecting a good deal of music, a part of which she gave to me. . . . And there were things to charm a young girl in the two little rooms upstairs. I remember a flounce of precious old lace, and chintzes, and quaint ornaments, and an In-

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dian prayer rug, Miss Crawford's special treasure, sent to her by her uncle, Dr. John Irwin Crawford, a naval officer who was much on the Indian seas . . . . Miss Crawford was not exactly beautiful, but I shall never forget the wonderful animation of her face at times, and its sadness in repose."

Mrs. Donald Urquhart, of Toronto, at whose hospitable house the Crawfords were always at home during the years they lived in Toronto, remembers "as though it were yesterday" this girl whose life was always creative, and always drawn to far-away and exquisitely suggestive things. "She would forget all her failures and discouragements when she was at the piano, or composing poetry or stories. Then—there was a strange thing!—she had a great delight in cutting out and making the most unique and beautiful little foreign figures, tiny dolls, always of oriental types, made out of vivid coloured silks or satins; Rajahs and Mandarins and Hindoo priests in their robes and turbans, with their attendants perfectly costumed. She would spend hours over these things, making every detail correct. They were arranged on a silk-covered cardboard stage half the size of my dining-room table."

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"She could not afford to have her poems well bound," continues Mrs. Urquhart, "so she made a special cover for ours, knowing how much my husband and I appreciated her work." And I held in my hand "Old Spookses' Pass" in faded peacock blue satin, covered with fine rose-point lace.

And against this a recollection, faint with age, of the young woman whom "as a child I used to watch in church—wondering what a poet was like."

It was in Peterborough that Katherine Wallis, the well-known Canadian sculptor, recalled the scornful attitude of the people of the town, who thought that a somewhat detached manner on the part of the poet was a mere affectation. Miss Wallis also remembers the fact that children would follow her to call out the, to them, fantastic and unfamiliar name "Valancy." "Even yet," she says, "you may ask in vain in the public library here for a copy of her 'Collected Poems'."

Perhaps the struggle was too hard. Perhaps an ardent flame burns too fast. Practical people will say that a woman with an inherited

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heart disease courts death by overwork. At any rate there was no premonition of her swift end, which occurred in Toronto on the 12th of February, 1887.

Her body was taken to Peterborough and there, where the Otonabee encircles the beautiful Little Lake Cemetery, she lies, and over her grave is a Celtic cross erected by a group of friends.

"In Toronto," says Mrs. Heffernan, recalling a bitter winter's day, "several people sent flowers. But one tribute was nameless. It was a great white bloom bearing the message, 'The Rose of a Nation's Thanks'."





# ANTHOLOGY

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*From "WHO SEES A VISION"*

Who sees a vision bright and bold  
Hath found a treasure of pure gold;  
For say it vanisheth  
When morning banisheth  
Sleep, mother of all dreams,  
Before his comely beams,  
Thou didst not wis, before sleep showed to thee  
That things so nobly fair might ever be;

But now that thou dost know,  
Waking shall make it so;  
So here is treasure hid  
Beneath a closed eyelid.

Who dreams a dream both sweet and bright  
Hath found a true nectar of delight;  
For say with pain and smart  
It fadeth out apart,  
Thy gallèd heart did never,  
In waking sad endeavour,  
Bend back the veil of murky tapestry  
And show such things of light and joy to thee;

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But now that thou dost know,  
Hope builds her skyward bow;  
There cannot be a shade  
But for it form is made.

### THE ROSE

The Rose was given to man for this:  
He, sudden seeing it in later years,  
Should swift remember Love's first lingering  
kiss  
And Grief's last lingering tears;

Or, being blind, should feel its yearning soul  
Knit all its piercing perfume round his own,  
Till he should see on memory's ample scroll  
All roses he had known;

Or, being hard, perchance his finger-tips  
Careless might touch the satin of its cup,  
And he should feel a dead babe's budding lips  
To his lips lifted up;

Or, being deaf and smitten with its star,  
Should, on a sudden, almost hear a lark  
Rush singing up—the nightingale afar  
Sing thro' the dew-bright dark;

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Or, sorrow-lost in paths that round and round  
Circle old graves, its keen and vital breath  
Should call to him within the yew's bleak bound  
Of Life, and not of death.

### SAID THE DAISY

There ne'er was blown out of the yellow east  
So fresh, so fair, so sweet a morn as this.  
The dear earth decked herself as for a feast;  
And, as for me, I trembled with my bliss.  
The young grass round me was so rich with dew,  
And sang me such sweet, tender strains, as low  
The breath of dawn among its tall spikes blew;  
But what it sang none but myself can know!

O never came so glad a morn before!  
So rosy dimpling burst the infant light,  
So crystal pure the air the meadows o'er,  
The lark with such young rapture took his  
flight,  
The round world seemed not older by an hour  
Than mine own daisy self! I laughed to see  
How, when her first red roses paled and died,  
The blue sky smiled, and decked her azure lea  
With daisy clouds, white, pink-fringed, just  
like me!

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"This is a morn for song," sang out the lark,  
"O silver-tressed beloved!" My golden eye  
Watched his brown wing blot out the last star-  
spark

Amidst the daisy cloudlets of the sky.

"No morn so sweet as this, so pure, so fair—  
God's bud time," so the oldest white thorn  
said,

And she has lived so long; yet here and there  
Such fresh white buds begem her ancient  
head.

And from her thorny bosom all last night  
Deep in my dew-sealed sleep I heard a  
note

So sweet a voice of anguish and delight  
I dreamed a red star had a bird-like throat  
And that its rays were music which had crept  
'Mid the white-scented blossoms of the  
thorn,

And that to hear her sing the still night wept  
With mists and dew until the yellow morn.

I wonder, wonder what the song he sang,  
That seemed to drown in melody the vales!  
I knew my lark's song as he skyward sprang,  
But only roses know the nightingale's.

## ANTHOLOGY

The yellow cowslip bent her honeyed lips  
And whispered: "Daisy, wert thou but as high  
As I am, thou couldst see the merry ships  
On yon blue wondrous field blown gaily by."

A gay, small wind, arch as a ruddy fox,  
Crept round my slender, green and dainty  
stem,  
And piped: "Let me but shake thy silver locks  
And free thy bent head from its diadem  
Of diamond dew, and thou shalt rise and gaze  
Like the tall cowslips, o'er the rustling grass,  
On proud, high cliffs, bright strands and spark-  
ling bays,  
And watch the white ships as they gaily pass."

"Oh, while thou mayst keep thou thy crystal  
dew!"

Said the aged thorn, where sang the heart of  
night,  
The nightingale. "The sea is very blue,  
The sails of ships are wondrous swift and  
white.

Soon, soon enough thy dew will sparkling die,  
And thou, with burning brow and thirsty lips,  
Wilt turn the golden circle of thine eye,  
Nor joy in them, on ocean and her ships!"

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There never flew across the violet hills  
A morn so like a dove with jewelled eyes,  
With soft wings fluttering like the sound of  
rills,  
And gentle breast of rose and azure dyes.  
The purple trumpets of the clover sent  
Such rich, dew-loosened perfume, and the  
bee  
Hung like a gold drop in the woodbine's tent.  
What care I for the gay ships and the sea!

## GOOD-BYE'S THE WORD

Heave up the anchor, heave ye ho!  
And swing her head about;  
The blue flag flies, the breezes blow,  
Let all her canvas out!  
Blue eyes and black upon the quay  
Are smiling tears away;  
And sweethearts blush at parting kiss,  
And wives and mothers pray.

The babe upon my Polly's breast will toddle  
down the strand,  
And pipe a welcome when again our good ship  
sails to land;



## ANTHOLOGY

And Tom will reach my elbow then, and Ned  
be shoulder high—

Avast! avast! I sail too fast—good-bye's  
the word, good-bye!

Heave up the anchor, heave ye ho!  
And speed us on our way;  
A stiff breeze, sweet with rose and thyme  
Blows fast along the bay;  
The sails round out, the rattling shrouds  
Are loud with noisy glee;  
The staunch craft trembles as she hears  
The footsteps of the sea.

Belike, my mates, 'tis just the way a lass's  
heart will beat  
When sounds upon the shingly strand her tar's  
returning feet;  
Or Poll will tremble when she hears my foot-  
steps drawing nigh—  
Avast! avast! I sail too fast—good-bye's the  
word, good-bye!

Heave up the anchor, heave ye ho!  
God bless the dear brown hands  
That wave "good-bye" when Jack sets sail  
To steer for other strands;

## ISABELLA VALANCY CRAWFORD

And tho' our ship her anchor heaves  
When she would sail afar,  
My eyes! she don't resemble there  
The ways of true Jack tar.

For when Jack casts life's anchor down—his  
heart, belike, you know—  
He never hauls it up again, whatever squalls  
may blow;  
Mine's grappled safe in Polly's breast until  
the day I die—  
Avast! avast! the wind blows fast—good-bye's  
the word, good-bye!

### A HARVEST SONG

The noon was as a crystal bowl  
The red wine mantled through;  
Around it like a Viking's beard  
The red-gold hazes blew,  
As tho' he quaffed the ruddy draught  
While swift his galley flew.

This mighty Viking was the Night;  
He sailed about the earth,  
And called the merry harvest-time  
To sing him songs of mirth;  
And all on earth or in the sea  
To melody gave birth.

## ANTHOLOGY

The valleys of the earth were full  
To rocky lip and brim  
With golden grain that shone and sang  
When woods were still and dim,  
A little song from sheaf to sheaf—  
Sweet Plenty's cradle-hymn.

O gallant were the high tree-tops,  
And gay the strain they sang!  
And cheerfully the moon-lit hills  
Their echo-music rang!  
And what so proud and what so loud  
As was the ocean's clang!

But O the little humming song  
That sang among the sheaves!  
'Twas grander than the airy march  
That rattled thro' the leaves,  
And prouder, louder, than the deep,  
Bold clanging of the waves:

"The lives of men, the lives of men  
With every sheaf are bound!  
We are the blessing which annuls  
The curse upon the ground!  
And he who reaps the Golden Grain  
The Golden Love hath found."

# ISABELLA VALANCY CRAWFORD

## ROSES IN MADRID

Roses, Senors, roses!  
Love is subtly hid  
In the fragrant roses  
Blown in gay Madrid.  
Roses, Senors, roses!  
Look, look, look, and see  
Love hanging in the roses  
Like a golden bee!  
Ha! ha! shake the roses—  
Hold a palm below;  
Shake him from the roses,  
Catch the vagrant—so!

High I toss the roses  
From my brown palm up,  
Like the wine that bubbles  
From a golden cup.  
Catch the roses, Senors,  
Light on finger-tips;  
He who buys red roses  
Dreams of crimson lips.  
Tinkle my fresh roses,  
With the rare dews wet;  
Clink my crisp, red roses  
Like a castanet.

## ANTHOLOGY

Roses, Senors, roses!  
Come, Hidalgo, buy!  
Proudly wait my roses  
For thy Rose's eye.  
Be thy Rose as stately  
As a pacing deer,  
Worthy are my roses  
To burn behind her ear.  
Ha! ha! I can see thee,  
Where the fountains foam,  
Twining my red roses  
In her golden comb!

Roses, Donnas, roses!  
None so fresh as mine,  
Plucked at rose of morning  
By our Lady's shrine.  
Those that first I gathered  
Laid I at her feet,  
That is why my roses  
Still are fresh and sweet.  
Roses, Donnas, roses,  
Roses, waxen fair!  
Acolytes my roses,  
'Censing ladies' prayer!

## ISABELLA VALANCY CRAWFORD

Roses, roses, roses!  
Hear the tawny bull  
Thund'ring in the circus—  
Buy your arms full.  
Roses by the dozen!  
Roses by the score!  
Pelt the victor with them—  
Bull or toreador!

### THE CITY TREE

I stand within the stony, arid town,  
I gaze forever on the narrow street,  
I hear forever passing up and down  
The ceaseless tramp of feet.

I know no brotherhood with far-locked woods,  
Where branches bourgeon from a kindred  
sap,  
Where o'er mossed roots, in cool, green soli-  
tudes,  
Small silver brooklets lap.

No emerald vines creep wistfully to me  
And lay their tender fingers on my bark;  
High may I toss my boughs, yet never see  
Dawn's first most glorious spark.

## ANTHOLOGY

When to and fro my branches wave and sway,  
Answ'ring the feeble wind that faintly calls,  
They kiss no kindred boughs, but touch alway  
The stones of climbing walls.

My heart is never pierced with song of bird;  
My leaves know nothing of that glad unrest  
Which makes a flutter in the still woods heard  
When wild birds build a nest.

There never glance the eyes of violets up,  
Blue, into the deep splendour of my green;  
Nor falls the sunlight to the primrose cup  
My quivering leaves between.

Not mine, not mine to turn from soft delight  
Of woodbine breathings, honey-sweet and  
warm;  
With kin embattled rear my glorious height  
To greet the coming storm!

Not mine to watch across the free, broad plains  
The whirl of stormy cohorts sweeping fast,  
The level silver lances of great rains  
Blow onward by the blast!

Not mine the clamouring tempest to defy,  
Tossing the proud crest of my dusky leaves--  
Defender of small flowers that trembling lie  
Against my barky greaves!

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Not mine to watch the wild swan drift above,  
Balanced on wings that could not choose  
between

The wooing sky, blue as the eye of love,  
And my own tender green!

And yet my branches spread, a kingly sight,  
In the close prison of the drooping air:  
When sun-vexed noons are at their fiery  
height  
My shade is broad, and there

Come city toilers, who their hour of ease  
Weave out to precious seconds as they lie  
Pillowed on horny hands, to hear the breeze  
Through my great branches die.

I see no flowers, but as the children race  
With noise and clamour through the dusty  
street,  
I see the bud of many an angel face,  
I hear their merry feet.

No violets look up, but, shy and grave,  
The children pause and lift their crystal eyes  
To where my emerald branches call and wave  
As to the mystic skies.



## ANTHOLOGY

### THE CAMP OF SOULS

My white canoe, like the silvery air  
O'er the River of Death that darkly rolls  
When the moons of the world are round and  
fair,  
I paddle back from the "Camp of Souls."  
When the wishton-wish in the low swamp  
grieves  
Come the dark plumes of red "Singing  
Leaves."

Two hundred times have the moons of spring  
Rolled over the bright bay's azure breath  
Since they decked me with plumes of an eagle's  
wing,  
And painted my face with the "paint of  
death,"  
And from their pipes o'er my corpse there broke  
The solemn rings of the blue "last smoke."

Two hundred times have the wintry moons  
Wrapped the dead earth in a blanket white;  
Two hundred times have the wild sky loons  
Shrieked in the flush of the golden light  
Of the first sweet dawn, when the summer  
weaves  
Her dusky wigwam of perfect leaves.

## ISABELLA VALANCY CRAWFORD

Two hundred moons of the falling leaf  
    Since they laid my bow in my dead right hand  
And chanted above me the "song of grief"  
    As I took my way to the spirit land;  
Yet when the swallow the blue air cleaves  
Comes the dark plumes of red "Singing  
    Leaves."

White are the wigwams in that far camp,  
    And the star-eyed deer on the plains are  
    found;  
No bitter marshes or tangled swamp  
    In the Manitou's happy hunting-ground!  
And the moon of summer forever rolls  
Above the red men in their "Camp of Souls."

Blue are its lakes as the wild dove's breast,  
    And their murmurs soft as her gentle note;  
As the calm, large stars in the deep sky rest,  
    The yellow lilies upon them float;  
And canoes, like flakes of the silvery snow,  
Thro' the tall, rustling rice-beds come and go.

Green are its forests; no warrior wind  
    Rushes on war trail the dusk grove through,  
With leaf-scalps of tall trees mourning behind;  
    But South Wind, heart friend of Great  
    Manitou,

## ANTHOLOGY

When ferns and leaves with cool dewes are wet,  
Blows flowery breaths from his red calumet.

Never upon them the white frosts lie,  
Nor glow their green boughs with the "paint  
of death";

Manitou smiles in the crystal sky,  
Close breathing above them His life-strong  
breath;

And He speaks no more in fierce thunder  
sound,

So near is His happy hunting-ground.

Yet often I love, in my white canoe,  
To come to the forests and camps of earth:  
'Twas there death's black arrow pierced me  
through;

'Twas there my red-browed mother gave me  
birth;

There I, in the light of a young man's dawn,  
Won the lily heart of dusk "Springing Fawn."

And love is a cord woven out of life,  
And dyed in the red of the living heart;  
And time is the hunter's rusty knife,  
That cannot cut the red strands apart:  
And I sail from the spirit shore to scan  
Where the weaving of that strong cord began.

## ISABELLA VALANCY CRAWFORD

But I may not come with a giftless hand,  
So richly I pile, in my white canoe,  
Flowers that bloom in the spirit land,  
Immortal smiles of Great Manitou.  
When I paddle back to the shores of earth  
I scatter them over the white man's hearth.  
For love is the breath of the soul set free;  
So I cross the river that darkly rolls,  
That my spirit may whisper soft to thee  
Of *Thine* who wait in the "Camp of Souls."  
When the bright day laughs, or the wan night  
grieves,  
Come the dusky plumes of red "Singing  
Leaves."

## THE DARK STAG

A startled stag, the blue-grey Night,  
Leaps down beyond black pines.  
Behind—a length of yellow light—  
The hunter's arrow shines:  
His moccasins are stained with red,  
He bends upon his knee,  
From covering peaks his shafts are sped,  
The blue mists plume his mighty head—  
Well may the swift Night flee!

## ANTHOLOGY

The pale, pale Moon, a snow-white doe,  
    Bounds by his dappled flank:  
They beat the stars down as they go,  
    Like wood-bells growing rank.  
The winds lift dewlaps from the ground,  
    Leap from the quaking reeds;  
Their hoarse bays shake the forests round,  
With keen cries on the track they bound,—  
    Swift, swift the dark stag speeds!

Away! his white doe, far behind,  
    Lies wounded on the plain;  
Yells at his flank the nimblest wind,  
    His large tears fall in rain;  
Like lily-pads, small clouds grow white  
    About his darkling way;  
From his bald nest upon the height  
The red-eyed eagle sees his flight;  
He falters, turns, the antlered Night—  
    The dark stag stands at bay!

His feet are in the waves of space;  
    His antlers broad and dun  
He lowers; he turns his velvet face  
    To front the hunter, Sun;

## ISABELLA VALANCY CRAWFORD

He stamps the liliated clouds, and high  
His branches fill the west.

The lean stork sails across the sky,  
The shy loon shrieks to see him die,  
The winds leap at his breast.

Roar the rent lakes as thro' the wave  
Their silver warriors plunge,  
As vaults from core of crystal cave  
The strong, fierce muskallunge;  
Red torches of the sumach glare,  
Fall's council-fires are lit;  
The bittern, squaw-like, scolds the air;  
The wild duck splashes loudly where  
The rustling rice-spears knit.

Shaft after shaft the red Sun speeds:  
Rent the stag's dappled side;  
His breast, fanged by the shrill winds, bleeds,  
He staggers on the tide;  
He feels the hungry waves of space  
Rush at him high and blue;  
Their white spray smites his dusky face,  
Swifter the Sun's fierce arrows race  
And pierce his stout heart thro'.

## ANTHOLOGY

His antlers fall; once more he spurns  
The hoarse hounds of the day;  
His blood upon the crisp blue burns,  
Reddens the mounting spray;  
His branches smite the wave—with cries  
The loud winds pause and flag—  
He sinks in space—red glow the skies,  
The brown earth crimson as he dies,  
The strong and dusky stag.

## LAUGHTER

Laughter wears a lilied gown—  
She is but a simple thing;  
Laughter's eyes are water-brown,  
Ever glancing up and down  
Like a woodbird's restless wing.  
Laughter slender is and round—  
She is but a simple thing;  
And her tresses fly unbound,  
And about her brow are found  
Buds that blossom by Mirth's spring.  
Laughter loves to praise and play—  
She is but a simple thing—  
With the children small who stray  
Under hedges, where the May  
Scents and blossoms richly fling.

## ISABELLA VALANCY CRAWFORD

Laughter coyly peeps and flits—

She is but a simple thing—

Round the flower-clad door, where sits

Maid who dimples as she knits,

Dreaming in the rosy spring.

Laughter hath light-tripping feet—

She is but a simple thing;

Yet may often Laughter meet

In the hayfield, gilt and sweet,

Where the mowers jest and sing.

Laughter shakes the bounteous leaves—

She is but a simple thing—

On the village ale-house eaves,

While the angered swallow grieves

And the rustic revellers sing.

Laughter never comes a-nigh—

She's a wise though simple thing—

Where men lay them down to die;

Nor will under stormy sky

Laughter's airy music ring.



## ANTHOLOGY

### HIS CLAY

He died ; he was buried, the last of his race,  
And they laid him away in his burial-place.

And he said in his will, "When I have done  
With the mask of clay that I have on,

"Bury it simply—I'm done with it,  
At best it is only a poor misfit.

"It cramped my brains and chained my soul,  
And it clogged my feet as I sought my goal.

"When my soul and I were inclined to shout  
O'er some noble thought we had chiselled  
out;

"When we'd polished the marble until it stood  
So fair that we truly said: "'Tis good!"

"My soul would tremble, my spirit quail,  
For it fell to the flesh to uplift the veil.

"It took our thought in its hands of clay,  
And lo! how the beauty had passed away.

"When Love came in to abide with me,  
I said, 'Welcome, Son of Eternity!"

## ISABELLA VALANCY CRAWFORD

"I built him an altar strong and white,  
Such as might stand in God's own sight;

"I chanted his glorious litany—  
Pure Love is the Son of Eternity;

"But ever my altar shook alway  
'Neath the brute hands of the tyrant clay.

"Its voice, with its accents harsh and drear,  
Mocked at my soul and wailed in its ear:

"Why tend the altar and bend the knee?  
Love lives and dies in the dust with me.'

"So the flesh that I wore chanced ever to be  
Less of my friend than my enemy.

"Is there a moment this death-strong earth  
Thrills, and remembers her time of birth?

"Is there a time when she knows her clay  
As a star in the coil of the astral way?

"Who may tell? But the soul in its clod  
Knows in swift moments its kinship to God.

"Quick lights in its chambers that flicker  
alway  
Before the hot breath of the tyrant clay.

## ANTHOLOGY

“So the flesh that I wore chanced ever to be  
Less of my friend than my enemy.

“So bury it deeply—strong foe, weak friend  
—And bury it cheaply—and there its end!”

## THE BUTTERFLY

When the moon was horned the mother died,  
And the child pulled at her hand and knee,  
And he rubbed her cheek and loudly cried:

“O mother, arise, give bread to me!”

But the pine tree bent its head,

And the wind at the door-post said:

“O child, thy mother is dead!”

The sun set his loom to weave the day;

The frost bit sharp like a silent cur;

The child by her pillow paused in his play:

“Mother, build up the sweet fire of fir!”

But the fir tree shook its cones,

And loud cried the pitiful stones:

“Wolf Death has thy mother’s bones!”

They bore the mother out on her bier;

Their tears made warm her breast and  
shroud;

The smiling child at her head stood near;

And the long, white tapers shook and bowed,

## ISABELLA VALANCY CRAWFORD

And said with their tongues of gold,  
To the ice lumps of the grave mold:  
"How heavy are ye and cold!"

They buried the mother; to the feast  
They flocked with the beaks of unclean crows.  
The wind came up from the red-eyed east  
And bore in its arms the chill, soft snows.  
They said to each other: "Sere  
Are the hearts the mother held dear;  
Forgotten, her babe plays here!"

The child with the tender snowflakes played,  
And the wind on its fingers twined his hair  
And still by the tall, brown grave he stayed,  
Alone in the churchyard lean and bare.  
The sods on the high grave cried  
To the mother's white breast inside:  
"Lie still; in thy deep rest abide!"

Her breast lay still like a long-chilled stone,  
Her soul was out on the bleak, grey day;  
She saw her child by the grave alone,  
With the sods and snow and wind at play.  
Said the sharp lips of the rush,  
"Red as thy roses, O bush,  
With anger the dead can blush!"

## ANTHOLOGY

A butterfly to the child's breast flew,\*  
Fluttered its wings on his sweet, round cheek  
Danced by his fingers, small, cold and blue.  
The sun strode down past the mountain peak  
The butterfly whispered low  
To the child: "Babe, follow me; know,  
Cold is the earth here below."

The butterfly flew; followed the child,  
Lured by the snowy torch of its wings;  
The wind sighed after them soft and wild  
Till the stars wedded night with golden rings;  
Till the frost upreared its head,  
And the ground to it groaned and said:  
"The feet of the child are lead!"

The child's head drooped to the brown, sere  
mold,  
On the crackling cones his white breast lay;  
The butterfly touched the locks of gold,  
The soul of the child sprang from its clay.  
The moon to the pine tree stole,  
And, silver-lipped, said to its bole;  
"How strong is the mother's soul!"

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\* In Eastern Europe the soul of the deceased is said to hover, in the shape of a bird or butterfly, close to the body until after the burial.

## ISABELLA VALANCY CRAWFORD

The wings of the butterfly grew out  
To the mother's arms, long, soft and white;  
She folded them warm her babe about,  
She kissed his lips into berries bright,  
She warmed his soul on her breast;  
And the east called out to the west:  
"Now the mother's soul will rest!"

Under the roof where the burial feast  
Was heavy with meat and red with wine,  
Each crossed himself as out of the east  
A strange wind swept over oak and pine.  
The trees to the home-roof said:  
"Tis but the airy rush and tread  
Of angels greeting thy dead."

### *From 'THE ROSE OF A NATION'S THANKS'*

A welcome? Oh, yes, 'tis a kindly word, but why  
will they plan and prate  
Of feasting and speeches and such small  
things, while the wives and mothers wait?  
Plan as ye will, and do as ye will, but think of  
the hunger and thirst  
In the hearts that wait; and do as ye will, but  
lend us our laddies first!

## ANTHOLOGY

Why, what would ye have? There is not a  
lad that treads in the gallant ranks  
Who does not already bear on his breast the  
Rose of a Nation's Thanks!

A welcome? There is not a babe at the breast  
won't spring at the roll of the drum  
That heralds them home—the keen, long cry  
in the air of "They come! They come!"  
And what of it all if ye bade them wade knee-  
deep in a wave of wine,  
And tossed tall torches, and arched the town  
in garlands of maple and pine?  
All dust in the wind of a woman's cry as she  
snatches from the ranks  
Her boy who bears on his bold young breast  
the Rose of a Nation's Thanks!

A welcome? O Joy, can they stay your feet,  
or measure the wine of your bliss?  
O Joy, let them have you alone to-day—a day  
with a pulse like this!  
A welcome? Yes, 'tis a tender thought, a  
green laurel that laps the sword—  
But Joy has the wing of a wild white swan, and  
the song of a free wild bird!

## ISABELLA VALANCY CRAWFORD

She must beat the air with her wing at will, at  
will must her song be driven  
From her heaving heart and tremulous throat  
through the awful arch of heaven.  
And what would ye have? There isn't a lad  
will burst from the shouting ranks  
But bears like a star on his faded coat the Rose  
of a Nation's Thanks!

### A BATTLE

Slowly the Moon her banderoles of light  
Unfurls upon the sky; her fingers drip  
Pale, silvery tides; her armoured warriors  
Leave Day's bright tents of azure and of gold,  
Wherein they hid them, and in silence flock  
Upon the solemn battlefield of Night  
To try great issues with the blind old king,  
The Titan Darkness, who great Pharaoh fought  
With groping hands, and conquered for a span.

The starry hosts with silver lances prick  
The scarlet fringes of the tents of Day,  
And turn their crystal shields upon their breasts  
And point their radiant lances, and so wait  
The stirring of the giant in his caves.



## ANTHOLOGY

The solitary hills send long, sad sighs  
As the blind Titan grasps their locks of pine  
And trembling larch to drag him toward the  
    sky,  
That his wild-seeking hands may clutch the  
    Moon  
From her war-chariot, scythed and wheeled  
    with light,  
Crush bright-mailed stars, and so, a sightless  
    king,  
Reign in black desolation! Low-set vales  
Weep under the black hollow of his foot,  
While sobs the sea beneath his lashing hair  
Of rolling mists, which, strong as iron cords,  
Twine round tall masts and drag them to  
    the reefs.

Swifter rolls up Astarte's light-scythed car:  
Dense rise the jewelled lances, groves of light;  
Red flouts Mars' banner in the voiceless war  
(The mightiest combat is the tongueless one);  
The silvery dartings of the lances prick  
His fingers from the mountains, catch his locks  
And toss them in black fragments to the winds,  
Pierce the vast hollow of his misty foot,  
Level their diamond tips against his breast,  
And force him down to lair within his pit

## ISABELLA VALANCY CRAWFORD

And thro' its chinks thrust down his groping  
hands

To quicken Hell with horror—for the strength  
That is not of the Heavens is of Hell.

### THE VESPER STAR

Unfold thy pinions, drooping to the sun,  
Just plunged behind the rough-browed moun-  
tain, deep

Crowned with the snows of hawthorn, aval-  
anché

All down its sloping shoulder with the bloom  
Of orchards, blushing to the ardent South,  
And to the evening oriflamme of rose  
That arches the blue concave of the sky.

O rosy star, thy trembling glory part  
From the great sunset splendour that its tides  
Sends rushing in swift billows to the east,  
And on their manes of fire outswell thy sails  
Of light-spun gold; and as the glory dies,  
Throbbing thro' changeful rose to silver mist,  
Laden with souls of flowers wooed abroad  
From painted petals by the ardent Night,  
Possess the heavens for one short splendid  
hour—

## ANTHOLOGY

Sole jewel on the Egypt brow of Night,  
Who steals, dark giant, to caress the Earth,  
And gathers from the glassy mere and sea  
The silver foldings of his misty robe,  
And hangs upon the air with brooding wings  
Of shadow, shadow, stretching everywhere.

## AN INTERREGNUM

Loud trumpets blow among the naked pines,  
Fine spun as sere-cloth rent from royal dead.  
Seen ghostly thro' high-lifted vagrant drifts,  
Shrill blaring, but no longer loud to moons  
Like a brown maid of Egypt stands the Earth,  
Her empty valley palms stretched to the Sun,  
For largesse of his gold. Her mountain tops  
Still beacon winter with white flame of snow,  
Fading along his track; her rivers shake  
Wild manes, and paw their banks as though  
to flee  
Their riven fetters.

Lawless is the time,  
Full of loud kingless voices that way gone:  
The Polar Cæsar striding to the north,  
Nor yet the sapphire-gated south unfolds

## ISABELLA VALANCY CRAWFORD

For Spring's sweet progress; the winds, un-  
kinged,

Reach gusty hands of riot round the brows  
Of lordly mountains waiting for a lord,  
And pluck the ragged beards of lonely pines—  
Watchers on heights for that sweet, hidden king,  
Bud-crowned and dreaming yet on other shores  
And mock their patient waiting. But by night  
The round Moon falters up a softer sky,  
Drawn by silver cords of gentler stars  
Than darted chill flames on the wintry earth.  
Within his azure battlements the Sun  
Regilds his face with joyance, for he sees,  
From those high towers, Spring, earth's fairest  
lord,

Soft-cradled on the wings of rising swans,  
With violet eyes slow budding into smiles,  
And small, bright hands with blossom largesse  
full,

Crowned with an orchard coronal of white,  
And with a sceptre of a ruddy reed  
Burnt at its top to amethystine bloom.  
Come, Lord, thy kingdom stretches barren  
hands!

Come, King, and chain thy rebels to thy throne  
With tendrils of the vine and jewelled links  
Of ruddy buds pulsating into flower!

## ANTHOLOGY

### SAID THE WEST WIND

I love old earth! Why should I lift my wings,  
My misty wings, so high above her breast  
That flowers would shake no perfumes from  
their hearts,

And waters breathe no whispers to the shores?  
I love deep places builded high with woods,  
Deep, dusk, fern-closed, and starred with nod-  
ding blooms,

Close watched by hills, green, garlanded and tall.

On hazy wings, all shot with mellow gold,  
I float, I float thro' shadows clear as glass;  
With perfumed feet I wander o'er the seas,  
And touch white sails with gentle finger-tips;  
I blow the faithless butterfly against  
The rose-red thorn, and thus avenge the rose;  
I whisper low amid the solemn boughs,  
And stir a leaf where not my loudest sigh  
Could move the emerald branches from their  
calm—

Leaves, leaves, I love ye much, for ye and I  
Do make sweet music over all the earth!

I dream by glassy ponds, and lingering, kiss  
The gold crowns of their lilies one by one,

## ISABELLA VALANCY CRAWFORD

As mothers kiss their babes who be asleep  
On the clear gilding of their infant heads,  
Lest if they kissed the dimple on the chin,  
The rose flecks on the cheek or dewy lips,  
The calm of sleep might feel the touch of love  
And so be lost. I steal before the rain,  
The longed-for guest of summer; as his fringe  
Of mist drifts slowly from the mountain peaks,  
The flowers dance to my fairy pipe and fling  
Rich odours on my wings, and voices cry,  
"The dear West Wind is damp, and rich with  
scent;  
We shall have fruits and yellow sheaves for  
this."

At night I play amid the silver mists,  
And chase them on soft feet until they climb  
And dance their gilded plumes against the stars;  
At dawn the last round primrose star I hide  
By wafting o'er her some small fleck of cloud,  
And ere it passes comes the broad, bold Sun  
And blots her from the azure of the sky,  
As later, toward his noon, he blots a drop  
Of pollen-gilded dew from violet cup  
Set bluely in the mosses of the wood.

## ANTHOLOGY

### *From 'BETWEEN THE WIND AND RAIN'*

Long swayed the grasses like a rolling wave  
Above an undertow; the mastiff cried;  
Low swept the poplars, groaning in their hearts;  
And iron-footed stood the gnarlèd oaks,  
And braced their woody thews against the  
storm.

Lashed from the pond, the ivory cygnets sought  
The carven steps that plunged into the pool;  
The peacocks screamed and dragged forgotten  
plumes;

On the sheer turf all shadows subtly died  
In one large shadow sweeping o'er the land;  
Bright windows in the ivy blushed no more;  
The ripe, red walls grew pale, the tall vane dim.  
Like a swift offering to an angry god,  
O'erweighted vines shook plum and apricot  
From trembling trellis, and the rose trees  
poured

A red libation of sweet, ripened leaves  
On the trim walks; to the high dove-cote set  
A stream of silver wings and violet breasts,  
The hawk-like storm down swooping on their  
track.

## ISABELLA VALANCY CRAWFORD

### CANADA TO ENGLAND

Gone are the days, old Warrior of the Seas,  
When thine armed head, bent low to catch my  
voice,

Caught but the plaintive sighings of my woods,  
And the wild roar of rock-dividing streams,  
And the loud bellow of my cataracts,  
Bridged with the seven splendours of the bow.  
When Nature was a Samson yet unshorn,  
Filling the land with solitary might,  
Or as the Angel of the Apocalypse,  
One foot upon the primeval bowered land,  
One foot upon the white mane of the sea,  
My voice but faintly swelled the ebb and flow  
Of the wild tides and storms that beat upon  
The rocky girdle—loud shrieking from the Ind  
Ambrosial-breathing furies; from the north  
Thundering with Arctic bellows, groans of seas  
Rising from tombs of ice disrupted by  
The magic kisses of the wide-eyed sun.

The times have won a change. Nature no more  
Lords it alone and binds the lonely land  
A serf to tongueless solitudes; but Nature's self  
Is led, glad captive, in light fetters rich  
As music-sounding silver can adorn;  
And man has forged them, and our silent God



## ANTHOLOGY

Behind His flaming worlds smiles on the deed.  
"Man hath dominion"—words of primal  
    might;

"Man hath dominion"—thus the words of God.

If destiny is writ on night's dusk scroll,  
Then youngest stars are dropping from the  
    hand

Of the Creator, sowing on the sky  
My name in seeds of light. Ages will watch  
Those seeds expand to suns, such as the tree  
Bears on its boughs, which grows in Paradise.

How sounds my voice, my warrior kinsman,  
    now?

Sounds it not like to thine in lusty youth—  
A world-possessing shout of busy men,  
Veined with the clang of trumpets and the noise  
Of those who make them ready for the strife,  
And in the making ready bruise its head?  
Sounds it not like to thine—the whispering vine,  
The robe of summer rustling thro' the fields,  
The lowing of the cattle in the meads,  
The sound of Commerce, and the music-set,  
Flame-brightened step of Art in stately halls—  
All the infinity of notes which chord  
The diapason of a Nation's voice?

## ISABELLA VALANCY CRAWFORD

My infants' tongues lisp word for word with  
thine;

We worship, wed, and die, and God is named  
That way ye name Him—strong bond between  
Two mighty lands when as one mingled cry,  
As of one voice, Jehovah turns to hear.

The bonds between us are no subtle links  
Of subtle minds binding in close embrace,  
Half-struggling for release, two alien lands,  
But God's own seal of kindred, which to burst  
Were but to dash His benediction from  
Our brows. "Who loveth not his kin,  
Whose face and voice are his, how shall he love  
God whom he hath not seen?"

## TORONTO

She moves to meet the centuries, her feet  
All shod with emerald, and her light robe  
Fringed with leaves singing in the jazel air.  
Her tire is rich, not with stout battlements,  
Prophets of strife, but wealthy with tall spires  
All shining Godward, rare with learning's  
domes,

And burning with young stars that promise suns  
To clasp her older brows. On her young breast  
Lie linked the fair, clear pearls of many homes—

## ANTHOLOGY

Mighty and lovely chain, from its white strength  
Hangs on her heart the awful jewel, Hope.

She moves to meet the centuries, nor lies  
All languid waiting, with the murmuring kiss  
Of the large waters on white, nerveless feet,  
And dim, tranced gaze upon the harbour bar,  
And dusk, still boughs knit over her prone head,  
And rose-soft hands that idly pluck the turf,  
And rose lips singing idly thro' her dream.

She hears the marching centuries which Time  
Leads up the dark peaks of Eternity:

The pulses of past warriors bound in her;  
The pulses of dead sages beat in her;  
The pulses of dead merchants stir in her;  
The roses of her young feet turn to flame,  
Yet ankle-deep in tender buds of spring;  
Till, with the perfumes of close forests thick  
Upon her tender flesh, she to her lips  
Lifts the bold answering trump, and winding  
shrill

With voices of her people and her waves  
Notes of quick joy, half queen, half child, she  
bounds

To meet the coming Time, and climbs the steps  
Of the tall throne he builds upon her strand.

## ISABELLA VALANCY CRAWFORD

Toronto, joy and peace! When comes the day  
Close domes of marble rich with gold leap up  
From porphyry pillars to the eye-clear sky,  
And when the wealthy fringes of thy robe  
Sweep outward league on league, and to thee  
come

The years all bowed with treasures for thy  
house,

On lusty shoulders, still remember thee  
Of thy first cradle on the lilies' lap  
In the dim woods; and tho' thy diadem  
Make a new sunrise, still, amid its flame  
Twine for the nursing lilies' sake the glow  
Of God-like lilies round about thy brows—  
Honour and Peace and sweet-breathed Charity!

## CURTIUS

How spake the Oracle, my Curtius, how?  
Methought, while on the shadowed terraces  
I walked and looked toward Rome, an echo  
came

Of legion wails, blent into one deep cry.  
"O Jove!" I thought, "the Oracles have said,  
And, saying, touched some swiftly answering  
chord

General to every soul." And then my heart

## ANTHOLOGY

(I being here alone) beat strangely loud,  
Responsive to the cry, and my still soul  
Informed me thus: "Not such a harmony  
Could spring from aught within the souls of men,  
But that which is most common to all souls.  
Lo! that is sorrow!"

Nay, Curtius, I could smile  
To tell thee, as I listened to the cry,  
How on the silver flax which blew about  
The ivory distaff in my languid hand  
I found large tears; such big and rounded drops  
As gather thro' dark nights on cypress boughs.  
And I was sudden angered, for I thought:  
"Why should a general wail come home to me  
With such vibration in my trembling heart  
That such great tears should rise and over-  
flow?"

Then shook them on the marble where I paced,  
Where instantly they vanished in the sun,  
As diamonds fade in flames. 'Twas foolish,  
Curtius!

And then methought how strange and lone it  
seemed,  
For till thou cam'st I seemed to be alone  
On the vined terrace, prisoned in the gold  
Of that still noontide hour. No widows stole

## ISABELLA VALANCY CRAWFORD

Up the snow-glimmering marble of the steps  
To take my alms and bless the gods and me;  
No orphans touched the fringes of my robe  
With innocent babe fingers, nor dropped the  
gold

I laid in their soft palms, to laugh, and stroke  
The jewels on my neck, or touch the rose  
Thou sayest, Curtius, lives upon my cheek.  
Perchance all lingered in the Roman streets  
To catch first tidings from the Oracles.  
The very peacocks drowsed in distant shades,  
Nor sought my hand for honeyed cake; and  
high

A hawk sailed blackly in the clear blue sky  
And kept my doves from cooing at my feet.

My lute lay there, bound with the small white  
buds  
Which, laughing, this bright morn thou brought  
and wreathed

Around it as I sang; but with that wail  
Dying across the vines and purple slopes,  
And breaking on its strings, I did not care  
To waken music—nor in truth could force  
My voice or fingers to it. So I strayed  
Where hangs thy best loved armour on the wall  
And pleased myself by filling it with thee.

## ANTHOLOGY

'Tis yet the goodliest armour in proud Rome,  
Say all the armourers; all Rome and I  
Know *thee* the lordliest bearer of a sword.  
Yet, Curtius, stay, there is a rivet lost  
From out the helmet, and a ruby gone  
From the short sword-hilt—trifles both which  
can

Be righted by to-morrow's noon. To-morrow's  
noon!—

Was there a change, my Curtius, in my voice  
When spake I these three words, "to-morrow's  
noon"?

Oh, I am full of dreams—methought there was.

Why, love, how darkly gaze thine eyes in mine!  
If loved I dismal thoughts I well could deem  
Thou sawest not the blue of my fond eyes,  
But looked between the lips of that dread pit—  
O Jove! to name it seems to curse the air  
With chills of death! We'll speak not of it,  
Curtius.

When I had dimmed thy shield with kissing it  
I went between the olives to the stalls.  
While Audax neighed out to me as I came,  
As I had been Hippona to his eyes,  
New dazzling from the one small mystic cloud

## ISABELLA VALANCY CRAWFORD

That, like a silver chariot, floated low  
In the ripe blue of noon, and seemed to pause,  
Stayed by the hilly round of yon aged tree.  
He stretched the ivory arch of his vast neck,  
Smiting sharp thunders from the marble floor  
With hoofs impatient of a peaceful earth;  
Shook the long silver of his burnished mane  
Until the sunbeams smote it into light  
Such as a comet trails across the sky.  
I love him, Curtius! Such magnanimous fires  
Leap from his eyes! And I do truly think  
That with thee seated on him, thy strong knees  
Against his sides, the bridle in his jaws  
In thy loved hand, to pleasure thee he'd spring  
Sheer from the verge of Earth into the breast  
Of Death and Chaos. Of Death and Chaos!—  
What omens seem to strike my soul to-day!

What is there in this blossom-hour should knit  
An omen in with every simple word?  
Should make yon willows with their hanging  
locks

Dusk sybils, muttering sorrows to the air?  
The roses, clamb'ring round yon marble Pan,  
Wave like red banners floating o'er the dead?  
The dead—there 'tis again! My Curtius, come,  
And thou shalt tell me of the Oracles



## ANTHOLOGY

And what sent hither that long cry of woe.  
Yet wait, yet wait, I care not much to hear.

While on thy charger's throbbing neck I leaned  
Romeward there passed across the violet slopes  
Five sacrificial bulls, with silver hides,  
And horns as cusped and white as Dian's bow,  
And lordly breasts which laid the honeyed  
thyme

Into long swarths, whence smoke of yellow bees  
Rose up in puffs, dispersing as it rose.  
For the great temple they. And as they passed  
With quiet gait I heard their drivers say  
The bulls were for the Altars, when should  
come

Word from the Oracles as to the Pit.  
O Curtius, Curtius, in my soul I see  
How black and fearful is its glutton throat!  
I will not look!  
O Soul, be blind and see not!

Then the men  
Waved their long goads, still juicy from the vine  
And plumed with bronzy leaves, and each to  
each  
Showed the sleek beauty of the rounded sides,  
The mighty curving of the lordly breasts,

## ISABELLA VALANCY CRAWFORD

The level lines of backs, the small, fine heads.  
And laughed and said, "The gods will have it thus,  
The choicest of the earth for sacrifice,  
Let it be man or maid, or lowing bull!"  
Where lay the witchcraft in their clownish  
words

To shake my heart? I know not; but it thrilled  
As Daphne's leaves thrill to a wind so soft  
One might not feel it on the open palm.  
I cannot choose but laugh, for what have I  
To do with altars and with sacrifice?

### *From 'SAID THE CANOE'*

My masters twain sang songs that wove—  
As they burnished hunting-blade and rifle—  
A golden thread with a cobweb trifle,  
Loud of the case and low of love:

"O Love! art thou a silver fish,  
Shy of the line and shy of gaffing,  
Which we do follow, fierce, yet laughing,  
Casting at thee the light-winged wish?  
And at the last shall we bring thee up  
From the crystal darkness, under the cup  
Of lily folden  
On broad leaves golden?"

## ANTHOLOGY

“O Love! art thou a silver deer  
With its feet as swift as wing of swallow,  
While we with rushing arrows follow?  
And at the last shall we draw near  
And o’er thy velvet neck cast thongs  
Woven of roses, stars and songs—  
New chains all moulden  
Of rare gems olden?”

They hung the slaughtered fish like swords  
On saplings slender; like scimitars,  
Bright, and ruddied from new-dead wars,  
Blazed in the light the scaly hordes.

They piled up boughs beneath the trees,  
Of cedar web and green fir tassel.  
Low did the pointed pine tops rustle,  
The camp-fire blushed to the tender breeze.

The hounds laid dewlaps on the ground  
With needles of pine, sweet, soft and rusty,  
Dreamed of the dead stag stout and lusty;  
A bat by the red flames wove its round.

The darkness built its wigwam walls  
Close round the camp, and at its curtain  
Pressed shapes, thin, woven and uncertain  
As white locks of tall waterfalls.

## ISABELLA VALANCY CRAWFORD

### *From 'MALCOLM'S KATIE'*

The South Wind laid his moccasins aside,  
Broke his gay calumet of flowers, and cast  
His useless wampum, beaded with cool dew,  
Far from him northward; his long, ruddy spear  
Flung sunward, whence it came, and his soft  
locks

Of warm, fine haze grew silvery as the birch.  
His wigwam of green leaves began to shake;  
The crackling rice-beds scolded harsh like  
squaws;

The small ponds pouted up their silver lips;  
The great lakes eyed the mountains, whispered  
"Ugh!

Are ye so tall, O chiefs? Not taller than  
Our plumes can reach," and rose a little way,  
As panthers stretch to try their velvet limbs  
And then retreat to purr and bide their time.

At morn the sharp breath of the night arose  
From the wide prairies, in deep-struggling seas,  
In rolling breakers, bursting to the sky;  
In tumbling surfs, all yellowed faintly thro'  
With the low sun; in mad, conflicting crests,  
Voiced with low thunder from the hairy throats  
Of the mist-buried herds. And for a man  
To stand amid the cloudy roll and moil,

## ANTHOLOGY

The phantom waters breaking overhead,  
Shades of vexed billows bursting on his breast,  
Torn caves of mist walled with a sudden gold—  
Resealed as swift as seen—broad, shaggy fronts  
Fire-eyed, and tossing on impatient horns  
The wave impalpable—was but to think  
A dream of phantoms held him as he stood.

The pulseless forest, locked and interlocked  
So closely bough with bough and leaf with leaf,  
So serfed by its own wealth, that while from  
    high,  
The moons of summer kissed its green-glossed  
    locks,  
And round its knees the merry West Wind  
    danced,  
And round its ring, compacted emerald,  
The South Wind crept on moccasins of flame,  
And the red fingers of th' impatient Sun  
Plucked at its outmost fringes, its dim veins  
Beat with no life, its deep and dusky heart  
In a deep trance of shadow felt no throb  
To such soft wooing answer. Thro' its dream  
Brown rivers of deep waters sunless stole;  
Small creeks sprang from its mosses, and  
    amazed,  
Like children in a wigwam curtained close

## ISABELLA VALANCY CRAWFORD

Above the great, dead heart of some red chief,  
Slipped on soft feet, swift stealing through the  
    gloom,  
Eager for light and for the frolic winds.

In this shrill moon the scouts of Winter ran  
From the ice-belted north, and whistling shafts  
Struck maple and struck sumach, and a blaze  
Ran swift from leaf to leaf, from bough to bough,  
Till round the forest flashed a belt of flame,  
And inward licked its tongues of red and gold  
To the deep-crannied inmost heart of all.  
Roused the still heart—but all too late, too  
    late!

Too late the branches, welded fast with leaves,  
Tossed, loosened, to the winds; too late the Sun  
Poured his last vigour to the deep, dark cells  
Of the dim wood. The keen two-bladed Moon  
Of Falling Leaves rolled up on crested mists,  
And where the lush, rank boughs had foiled  
    the Sun

In his red prime, her pale, sharp fingers crept  
After the wind and felt about the moss,  
And seemed to pluck from shrinking twig and  
    stem  
The burning leaves, while groaned the shud-  
    dering wood.

## ANTHOLOGY

Who journeyed where the prairies made a pause  
Saw burnished ramparts flaming in the sun  
With beacon fires, tall on their rustling walls.  
And when the vast horned herds at sunset drew  
Their sullen masses into one black cloud,  
Rolling thundrous o'er the quick pulsating plain  
They seemed to sweep between two fierce,  
    red suns  
Which, hunter-wise, shot at their glaring balls  
Keen shafts with scarlet feathers and gold  
    barbs.

By round, small lakes with thinner forests  
    fringed—  
More jocund woods that sung about the feet  
And crept along the shoulders of great cliffs—  
The warrior stags, with does and tripping fawns  
Like shadows black upon the throbbing mist  
Of evening's rose, flashed thro' the singing  
    woods,  
Nor tim'rous sniffed the spicy cone-breathed  
    air;  
For never had the patriarch of the herd  
Seen, limned against the farthest rim of light  
Of the low-dipping sky, the plume or bow  
Of the red hunter; nor, when stooped to drink,  
Had from the rustling rice-bed heard the shaft

## ISABELLA VALANCY CRAWFORD

Of the still hunter hidden in its spears—  
His bark canoe close knotted in its bronze,  
His form as stirless as the brooding air,  
His dusky eyes two fixed, unwinking fires,  
His bow-string tightened, till it subtly sang  
To the long throbs and leaping pulse that rolled  
And beat within his knotted, naked breast.

There came a morn the Moon of Falling Leaves  
With her twin silver blades had only hung  
Above the low set cedars of the swamp  
For one brief quarter, when the Sun arose  
Lusty with light and full of summer heat,  
And, pointing with his arrows at the blue  
Closed wigwam curtains of the sleeping Moon,  
Laughed with the noise of arching cataracts,  
And with the dove-like cooing of the woods,  
And with the shrill cry of the diving loon,  
And with the wash of saltless rounded seas,  
And mocked the white Moon of the Falling  
Leaves:

“Esa! esa! shame upon you, Pale Face!  
Shame upon you, Moon of Evil Witches!  
Have you killed the happy, laughing Summer?  
Have you slain the mother of the flowers  
With your icy spells of might and magic?  
Have you laid her dead within my arms?



## ANTHOLOGY

Wrapped her, mocking, in a rainbow blanket?  
Drowned her in the frost-mist of your anger?  
She is gone a little way before me;  
Gone an arrow's flight beyond my vision.  
She will turn again and come to meet me  
With the ghosts of all the stricken flowers  
In a blue mist round her shining tresses  
In a blue smoke in her naked forests.  
She will linger, kissing all the branches;  
She will linger, touching all the places,  
Bare and naked, with her golden fingers,  
Saying, 'Sleep and dream of me, my children;  
Dream of me, the mystic Indian Summer—  
I, who, slain by the cold Moon of Terror,  
Can return across the path of Spirits,  
Bearing still my heart of love and fire.'"

. . . . .

Soon the great heaps of brush were builded high,  
And, like a victor, Max made pause to clear  
His battle-field high strewn with tangled dead.  
Then roared the crackling mountains, and their  
fires

Met in high heaven, clasping flame with flame;  
The thin winds swept a cosmos of red sparks  
Across the bleak midnight sky; and the sun  
Walked pale behind the resinous black smoke.  
And Max cared little for the blotted sun,

## ISABELLA VALANCY CRAWFORD

And nothing for the startled, outshone stars;  
For love, once set within a lover's breast,  
Has its own sun, its own peculiar sky,  
All one great daffodil, on which do lie  
The sun, the moon, the stars, all seen at once  
And never setting, but all shining straight  
Into the faces of the trinity—  
The one beloved, the lover, and sweet love.

It was not all his own, the axe-stirred waste.  
In these new days men spread about the earth  
With wings at heel, and now the settler hears,  
While yet the axe rings on the primal woods,  
The shrieks of engines rushing o'er the wastes;  
Nor parts his kind to hew his fortunes out.  
And as one drop glides down the unknown rock  
And the bright-threaded stream leaps after it  
With welded billions, so the settler finds  
His solitary footsteps beaten out  
With a quick rush of panting human waves  
Upheaved by throbs of angry poverty,  
And, driven by keen blasts of hunger from  
Their native strands, so stern, so dark, so drear!

So shanties grew  
Other than his amid the blackened stumps;  
And children ran with little twigs and leaves  
And flung them, shouting, on the forest pyres

## ANTHOLOGY

Where burned the forest kings ; and in the glow  
Paused men and women when the day was done.  
There the lean weaver ground anew his axe,  
Nor backward looked upon the vanished loom,  
But forward to the ploughing of his fields,  
And to the rose of plenty in the cheeks  
Of wife and children ; nor heeded much the  
pangs

Of the roused muscles tuning to new work.  
The pallid clerk looked on his blistered palms  
And sighed and smiled, but girded up his loins  
And found new vigour as he felt new hope.  
The lab'rer with trained muscles, grim and  
grave,

Looked at the ground, and wondered in his soul  
What joyous anguish stirred his darkened  
heart

At the mere look of the familiar soil,  
And found his answer in the words, "*Mine  
own!*"

Then came smooth-coated men with eager eyes  
And talked of steamers on the cliff-bound lakes,  
And iron tracks across the prairie lands,  
And mills to crush the quartz of wealthy hills,  
And mills to saw the great wide-armed trees,  
And mills to grind the singing stream of grain.

## ISABELLA VALANCY CRAWFORD

And with such busy clamour mingled still  
The throbbing music of the bold, bright Axe—  
The steel tongue of the present; and the wail  
Of falling forests—voices of the past.

. . . . .

O Love builds on the azure sea,  
And Love builds on the golden sand,  
And Love builds on the rose-winged cloud,  
And sometimes Love builds on the land!

O if Love build on sparkling sea,  
And if Love build on golden strand,  
And if Love build on rosy cloud,  
To Love, these are the solid land!

O Love will build his lily walls,  
And Love his pearly roof will rear  
On cloud, or land, or mist, or sea—  
Love's solid land is everywhere!

## GISLI, THE CHIEFTAIN

### Part I

To the Goddess Lada prayed  
Gisli, holding high his spear  
Bound with buds of spring, and laughed  
All his heart to Lada's ear.

## ANTHOLOGY

Damp his yellow beard with mead;  
Loud the harps clanged thro' the day;  
With bruised breasts triumphant rode  
Gisli's galleys in the bay.

Bards sang in the banquet hall,  
Set in loud verse Gisli's fame;  
On their lips the war gods laid  
Fire to chant their warrior's name.

To the Love Queen Gisli prayed,  
Buds upon his tall spear's tip,  
Laughter in his broad blue eyes,  
Laughter on his bearded lip.

To the Spring Queen Gisli prayed.  
She, with mystic distaff slim,  
Spun her hours of love and leaves;  
Made the stony headlands dim—

Dim and green with tender grass;  
Blew on ice-fields with red mouth;  
Blew on lovers' hearts and lured  
White swans from the blue-arched south.

To the Love Queen Gisli prayed.  
Groaned far icebergs, tall and blue,  
As to Lada's distaff slim  
All their ice-locked fires flew.

## ISABELLA VALANCY CRAWFORD

To the Love Queen Gisli prayed.

She, with red hands, caught and spun  
Yellow flames from crater lips,  
Long flames from the waking sun.

To the Love Queen Gisli prayed.

She with loom and beam and spell  
All the subtle fires of earth  
Wove, and wove them strong and well.

To the Spring Queen Gisli prayed.

Low the sun the pale sky trod;  
Mute her ruddy hand she raised,  
Beckoned back the parting god.

To the Love Queen Gisli prayed.

Warp and weft of flame she wove,  
Lada, Goddess of the Spring,  
Lada, Goddess strong of Love.

Sire of the strong chieftain's prayer,

Vict'ry, with his pulse of flame;  
Mead, its mother—loud he laughed,  
Calling on great Lada's name:

"Goddess Lada, Queen of Love,

Here I stand and quaff to thee,  
Deck for thee with buds my spear;  
Give a comely wife to me!

## ANTHOLOGY

- “Blow not to my arms a flake  
Of crisp snow in maiden guise,  
Mist of pallid hair and tips  
Of long ice-spears in her eyes.
- “When my death-sail skims the foam,  
Strain my oars on Death’s black sea,  
When my foot the Glass Hill seeks,  
Such a maid may do for me.
- “Now, O Lada, mate the flesh;  
Mate the fire and flame of life;  
Tho’ the soul go still unwed,  
Give the flesh its fitting wife!
- “As the galley runs between  
Skies with billows closely spun,  
Feeling but the wave that leaps  
Closest to it in the sun,
- “Throbs but to the present kiss  
Of the wild lips of the sea,  
Thus a man joys in his life—  
Nought of the Beyond knows he.
- “Goddess, here I cast bright buds,  
Spicy pine boughs at thy feet;  
Give the flesh its fitting mate—  
Life is strong and life is sweet!”

## ISABELLA VALANCY CRAWFORD

To the Love Queen Gisli prayed.

Warp and weft of flame she wove,  
Lada, Goddess of the Spring,  
Lada, Goddess strong of love.

### Part II

From harpings and sagas and mirth of the town  
Great Gisli, the chieftain, strode merrily down,  
His ruddy beard stretched in the loom of the  
wind,  
His shade like a dusky god striding behind.

Gylfag, his true hound, to his heel glided near,  
Sharp-fanged, lank and red as a blood-rusted  
spear.

As crests of the green bergs flame white in the  
sky,  
The town on its sharp hill shone brightly and  
high.

In fiords roared the ice shields; below the dumb  
stroke  
Of the Sun's red hammer rose blue mist like  
smoke.

It clung to the black pines and clung to the bay—  
The galleys of Gisli grew ghosts of the day.



## ANTHOLOGY

It followed the sharp wings of swans as they  
rose;

It fell to the wide jaws of swift riven floes;

It tamed the wild shriek of the eagle; grew dull  
The cries, in its foldings, of osprey and gull.

"Arouse thee, bold wind," shouted Gisli,  
"and drive

Floe and berg out to sea, as bees from a hive!

"Chase this woman-lipped haze at top of thy  
speed;

The soul with it cloys, as the tongue cloys with  
mead!

"Come, buckle thy sharp spear again to thy  
breast;

Thy galley hurl forth from the seas of the  
West!

"With the long, hissing oars beat loud the  
North Sea;

The sharp gaze of day give the eagles and  
me!

"No cunning mists shrouding the sea and the  
sky,

Or the brows of the great gods, bold wind,  
love I!

## ISABELLA VALANCY CRAWFORD

“As Gylfag, my hound, lays his fangs in the flank  
Of a grey wolf, shadowy, leather-thewed, lank,

“Bold wind, chase the blue mist, thy prow in  
its hair!

Sun, speed thy keen shafts thro’ the breast  
of the air!”

### Part III

The shouting of Gisli, the chieftain,  
Rocked the blue hazes, and, cloven  
In twain by sharp prow of the west wind,  
To north and to south fled the thick mist.

As in burnished walls of Valhalla,  
In cleft of the mist stood the chieftain,  
And up to the blue shield of Heaven  
Flung the loud shaft of his laughter.

Smote the mist with shrill spear the swift wind;  
Grey shapes fled like ghosts on the Hel Way;  
Bayed after their long locks hoarse Gylfag;  
Stared at them, triumphant, the eagles.

To mate and to eaglets the eagle  
Shrieked, “Gone is my foe of the deep mist,  
Rent by the vast hands of the kind gods  
Who know the knife-pangs of our hunger!”

## ANTHOLOGY

Shrill whistled the wind as his dun wings  
Strove with it feather by feather ;  
Loud grated the rock as his talons  
Spurned slowly its breast ; and his red eyes

Like fires seemed to flame in the swift wind—  
At his sides the darts of his hunger ;  
At his ears the shrieks of his eaglets ;  
In his breast the love of the quarry.

Unfurled to the northward and southward  
His wings broke the air, and to eastward  
His breast gave its iron ; and godward  
Pierced the shrill voice of his hunger.

Bared were his great sides as he laboured  
Up the steep blue of the broad sky,  
His gaze on the fields of his freedom ;  
To the gods spake the prayers of his gyres.

Bared were his vast sides as he glided,  
Black in the sharp blue of the north sky,  
Black over the white of the tall cliffs,  
Black over the arrow of Gisli.

## ISABELLA VALANCY CRAWFORD

### THE SONG OF THE ARROW

What know I,  
As I bite the blue veins of the throbbing sky,  
To the quarry's breast,  
Hot from the sides of the sleek, smooth nest?

What know I  
Of the will of the tense bow from which I fly?  
What the need or jest  
That feathers my flight to its bloody rest?

What know I  
Of the will of the bow that speeds me on high?  
What doth the shrill bow  
Of the hand on its singing soul-string know?

Flame-swift speed I,  
And the dove and the eagle shriek out and die.  
Whence comes my sharp zest  
For the heart of the quarry? The gods know  
best.

Deep pierced the red gaze of the eagle  
The breast of a cygnet below him.  
Beneath his dun wing from the eastward  
Shrill chanted the long shaft of Gisli;

## ANTHOLOGY

Beneath his dun wing from the westward  
A shaft shook that laughed in its biting—  
Met in the fierce breast of the eagle  
The arrows of Gisli and Brynhild.

### Part IV

A ghost along the Hel Way sped;  
The Hel shoes shod his misty tread;  
A phantom hound beside him sped.

Beneath the spandrels of the Way  
Worlds rolled to night—from night to day;  
In Space's ocean suns were spray.

Grouped worlds, eternal eagles, flew;  
Swift comets fell like noiseless dew;  
Young earths slow budded in the blue.

The waves of space, inscrutable,  
With awful pulses rose and fell,  
Silent and godly—terrible.

Electric souls of strong suns laid  
Strong hands along the awful shade  
That God about His God-work made.

Ever from all ripe worlds did break  
Men's voices, as when children speak,  
Eager and querulous and weak;

## ISABELLA VALANCY CRAWFORD

And pierced to the All-worker thro'  
His will that veiled Him from the view:  
"What hast Thou done? What dost Thou  
do?"

And ever from His heart did flow,  
Majestical, the answer low—  
The benison—"Ye shall not know!"

The wan ghost on the Hel Way sped,  
Nor yet Valhalla's lights were shed  
Upon the white brow of the Dead.

Nor sang within his ears the roll  
Of trumpets calling to his soul;  
Nor shone wide portals of the goal.

His spear grew heavy on his breast;  
Dropped, like a star, his golden crest;  
Far, far the vast Halls of the Blest!

His heart grown faint, his feet grown weak,  
He scaled the knit mists of a peak  
That ever parted grey and bleak,

And, as by unseen talons nipped,  
To the deep abysses slowly slipped.  
Then, swift as thick smoke strongly ripped

## ANTHOLOGY

By whirling winds from ashy ring  
Of dank weeds blackly smouldering,  
The peak sprang upward, quivering;

And, perdurable, set its face  
Against the pulsing breast of space.  
But for a moment; to its base

Refluent rolled the crest, new sprung,  
In clouds with ghastly lightnings stung;  
Faint thunders to their black feet clung.

His faithful hound ran at his heel;  
His thighs and breast were bright with steel;  
He saw the awful Hel Way reel.

But far along its bleak peaks rang  
A distant trump—its airy clang  
Like light through deathly shadows sprang.

He knew the blast—the voice of love  
(Cleft lay the throbbing peak above)  
Sailed light, winged like a silver dove.

On strove the toiling ghost, his soul  
Stirred like strong mead in wassail bowl  
That quivers to the shout of "Skoal!"

Strode from the mist, close-curved and cold  
As is a writhing dragon's fold,  
A warrior with shield of gold.

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A sharp blade glittered at his hip;  
Flamed like a star his lance's tip;  
His bugle sang at bearded lip.

Beneath his golden sandals flew  
Stars from the mist, as grass flings dew,  
Or red fruit falls from the dark yew.

As under sheltering wreaths of snow  
The dark blue north-flowers richly blow,  
Beneath long locks of silver glow

Clear eyes that, burning on a host,  
Would win a field at sunset lost,  
Ere stars from Odin's hand were tost.

He stretched his hand, he bowed his head;  
The wan ghost to his bosom sped—  
Dead kissed the bearded lips of Dead.

“What dost thou here, my youngest born?  
Thou, scarce yet fronted with life's storm,  
Why art thou from the dark earth torn?

“When high Valhalla pulsed and rang  
With harps that shook as grey bards sang,  
'Mid the loud joy I heard the clang

“Of Death's dark doors; to me alone  
Smote in thine awful dying groan—  
My soul recalled its blood and bone.



## ANTHOLOGY

“Viewless the cord which draws from far,  
To the round sun, some mighty star;  
Viewless the strong knit soul cords are.

“I felt thy dying gasp—thy soul  
Toward mine a kindred wave in roll;  
I left the harps, I left the bowl,

“I sought the Hel Way—I, the blest—  
That thou, new death-born son, should rest  
Upon the strong rock of my breast.

“What dost thou here, young, fair and bold?  
Sleek with youth’s gloss thy locks of gold;  
Thy years by flowers might yet be told.

“What dost thou at the ghostly goal,  
While yet thy years were to thy soul  
As mead yet shallow in the bowl?”

His arm about the pale ghost cast,  
The warrior blew a clear, loud blast;  
Like frightened wolves the mists fled past.

Grew firm the Way; worlds flamed to light  
The awful peak that thrust its height  
With swift throbs upward; like a flight

Of arrows from a host close set  
Long meteors pierced its breast of jet.  
Again the trump his strong lips met,

## ISABELLA VALANCY CRAWFORD

And, at its blast, blew all the day  
In broad winds on the awful Way;  
Sun smote at sun across the gray.

As reindeer smite the high-piled snow  
To find the green moss far below,  
They struck the mists, thro' which did glow  
Bright vales; and on a sea afar  
Lay, at a sunlit harbour bar,  
A galley gold-sailed like a star.

Spake the pale ghost as onward sped,  
Heart pressed to heart, the valiant dead  
(Soft the green paths beneath their tread):

“I loved—this is my tale—and died.  
The fierce chief hungered for my bride:  
The spear of Gisli pierced my side.

“And she—her love filled all my need;  
Her vows were sweet and strong as mead;  
Look, father! doth my heart still bleed?

“I built her round with shaft and spear;  
I kept her mine for one brief year—  
She laughed above my blood-stained bier!

“Upon a far and ice-peaked coast  
My galleys by long winds were tost:  
There Gisli feasted with his host

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“Of warriors triumphant. He  
Strode out from harps and revelry,  
And sped his shaft above the sea.

“Look, father! doth my heart bleed yet?  
His arrow Brynhild’s arrow met—  
My galleys anchored in their net.

“Again their arrows meet—swift lies  
That pierced me from their smiling eyes.  
How fiercely hard a man’s heart dies!

“She false—he false! There came a day  
Pierced by the fierce chief’s spear I lay—  
My ghost rose shrieking from its clay.

“I saw on Brynhild’s golden vest  
The shining locks of Gisli rest—  
I sought the Hel Way to the Blest.

“Father, put forth thy hand and tear  
Their twin shafts from my heart, all bare  
To thee—they rankle death-like there.”

. . . . .

Said the voice of Evil to the ear of Good,

“Clasp thou my strong right hand,  
Nor shall our clasp be known or understood  
By any in the land.

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"I, the dark giant, rule strong on the earth;  
Yet thou, bright one, and I  
Sprang from the one great mystery—at one  
birth  
We looked upon the sky.

"I labour at my bleak, stern toil, accursed  
Of all mankind; nor stay  
To rest, to murmur 'I hunger!' or 'I thirst!'  
Nor for my joy delay.

"My strength pleads strong with thee; doth  
any beat  
With hammer and with stone,  
Past tools, to use them to his deep defeat,  
To turn them on his throne,

"Then I, of God the mystery—toil with me,  
Brother; but in the sight  
Of men who know not, I stern son shall be  
Of Darkness—thou of Light!"

# AN APPRECIATION



## AN APPRECIATION



IGHTEEN years had passed since the death of Isabella Valancy Crawford. There was not a trace of her work save a few copies of the paper-covered "Old Spookses' Pass," which had found friends here and there, though at the time of its author's death there was no body of opinion to create a sense of its value. Many of her poems were lost in the old files of the Toronto daily newspapers.

Then, almost unannounced, there appeared in 1905 a Collected Edition of her Poems. It was gathered together by Mr. John W. Garvin, with the help and assistance of the one surviving member of the Crawford family, Mr. Stephen Walter Crawford. Miss Ethelwyn Wetherald wrote a delightful Introduction and the volume was published by William Briggs of Toronto. It met with enthusiastic reviews and editorials from one end of Canada to the other. It is strange to compare these tributes

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with the scanty comment paid to the same work two decades before.

This volume contains eighty-six poems, of which fifty-two appeared for the first time. The contents are divided into four sections: lyrics, narrative poems, blank verses and dialect. The editor tells us that "Miss Crawford preserved few of her poetic compositions in the original manuscript. Most of the poems in this volume, other than those printed in the early collection, were preserved in the form of clippings from the newspapers in which they originally appeared. Some of the finest poems such as 'The Rose of a Nation's Thanks,' 'Peace,' 'His Clay,' 'The Rose' and 'Fairy Toil' were discovered in the Toronto *Evening Telegram* of the years 1884 to 1887."

Open this book and you find the eternal poet, no longer thwarted by life but rich amazingly, overflowing with thought and full of ecstasy—an authentic voice of wide range and a timbre that probably came out of long inheritance; brilliant, pure, sophisticated and yet spontaneous.

In any analysis of the art of Isabella Valancy Crawford it must be remembered that hers is the poetry of youth, written in days of struggle



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and literary obscurity that seem, in their comparative nearness, incredibly remote. She was caught in the smoothest decades of Victorianism. The giants existed, and fought among themselves in a sort of holy war, but there was no rush of young insurgents clamouring to break new lances. She was far from the centres of art where *camaraderie* naturally exists. Alone she must work out her methods, the rhythms of world poetry moving far away in distant lordly strides. But she possessed in herself the necessary elements: tingling life, imagination rather than fancy, a sensuous love of beauty, invention, which always means a large knowledge of the world's facts, and, as she was no specialist, the transmutation of more than one gift adding its subtle power.

Sidney Lanier once said of William Morris, "He caught a crystal cupful of the yellow light of sunset, and, persuading himself to dream it wine, drank it with a sort of smile." But Miss Crawford's cup contains life, and life that is heady enough to intoxicate. In fact, she rather reminds one at times of Walt Whitman's democrat, who felt himself "taller than the redwoods of California" and "strong enough to

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handle hell." She is essentially dramatic, even in her treatment of nature. Her oak is "a dark loud lion of a tree." In "The Legend of the Mistletoe" she makes one of her own striking similes:

What time fierce Winter, like a wolf all lean,  
With sharp white fangs bit at weak woodland things,  
Pierced furry breasts, and broke small painted wings,  
And from dim homes all interlocked and green

Drove little spirits—those who love glossed leaves  
And glimmer in tall grasses—those who ride  
Glossed bubbles on the woodland's sheltered tide,  
And make blue hyacinths their household eaves.

Her wood flowers are "gay enamelled children of the swamp," and who but she could write of "a morn so like a dove with jewelled eyes"?

Like all creators this poet garnered from the past but lived vividly in the present. How she would have moulded the sensitive mercurial stuff of our day is problematic; what register of new perceptions it might have awakened it is perhaps idle to conjecture. Her constructive faculty was very great. Immaturity is evident in a certain lack of perspective, for, in spite of several dialect poems obviously intended to please an unsophisticated public, she had not lived long enough to acquire the gift of

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humour. With it, she would have been full-armed. Her work is, of course, the truest biography. It would seem that she had been grounded in Dante and had put on Tennyson, though, as in the case of most disciples, she outdoes her master in mannerisms. But while the early work abounds in imitative methods in its essence, it is not for a moment derivative. Indeed, its spontaneity is infectious. The clear-flowing lines seem to spring out of some glad, secret fountain of being. And there is great verbal colour. Take, as one example out of many, lines from "Said the Canoe," where a description of the lighting of a camp fire occurs:

Streamed incense from the hissing cones;  
Large crimson flashes grew and whirled;  
Thin golden nerves of sly light curled  
Round the dun camp; and rose faint zones,  
Half way about each grim bole knit,  
Like a shy child that would bedeck  
With its soft clasp a Brave's red neck. . . .  
Into the hollow hearts of brakes  
Yet warm from sides of does and stags  
Passed to the crisp, dark river-flags—  
Sinuous, red as copper-snakes  
Sharp-headed serpents, made of light,  
Glided and hid themselves in night.

In her way she is an experimenter in form. You feel her touching the rich embroidery to

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design new patterns. Sometimes she uses an irregular rhyme, but seldom an irregular rhythm. In the poem "March" the amphibrach foot is used effectively without rhyme, and it is not an old-fashioned mind that could write such a line—a hundred others might be quoted—as "her laugh—a zigzag butterfly of silver sound." But she has her old-world moods when the reader gets the impression of a weaver of mediæval tapestries. The forms and images are quaint—hundreds of years old. She writes of minstrels and wine-bowls, of steeds and lances and groves and hermits and golden-tressed maidens, old castles, black moats and trembling doves. She loves the adjective "ruddy," and quite overdoes it, and perpetually she uses the symbol of the rose. But no matter how ornate a poem may appear at a first reading, soon comes the piercing thought that makes short work of mere "poetic" words, the golden line that carries one away by sheer magic. A picture-maker always, more than that a dramatist, she understands the value of suspense and withdrawal, as well as a short, dry attack. The poetry of to-day is sharper than it was in her day; it

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makes use of clearer contrast. In many ways she was a forerunner.

The inclination to classical themes may have been a means of escape from a colourless environment. It was also a natural outcome of early training and reading. Such poems as "The Helot," "Cæsar's Wife," "Curtius" and "Vashti the Queen" are examples of this phase. They are written in blank verse, and in this form Miss Crawford excels, making of it a magnificent and rarely flexible instrument.

But there is an inherent oriental quality that, with the exception of Marjorie Pickthall, no Canadian possesses in anything like the same degree. Who, having read it, can forget certain lines in "Curtius" where a woman waits for her lover who has gone to hear news of the Oracle at Rome :

The very peacocks drowsed in distant shades,  
Nor sought my hand for honeyed cake; and high  
A hawk sailed blackly in the clear blue sky  
And kept my doves from cooing at my feet.

The concluding lines of the poem, where the frightened girl recalls the passing of sacrificial bulls, with silver hides, and their drivers on the road to the altars, are splendid in suggestive power :

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Then the men  
Waved their long goads, still juicy from the vine  
And plumed with bronzy leaves, and each to each  
Showed the sleek beauty of the rounded sides,  
The mighty curving of the lordly breasts,  
The level lines of backs, the small, fine heads,  
And laughed and said, "The gods will have it thus,  
The choicest of the earth for sacrifice,  
Let it be man or maid, or lowing bull!"  
Where lay the witchcraft in their clownish words  
To shake my heart? I know not; but it thrilled  
As Daphne's leaves thrill to a wind so soft  
One might not feel it on the open palm.  
I cannot choose but laugh, for what have I  
To do with altars and with sacrifice?

A sense of conscience is not always included among the singing leaves of a poet's wreath, but this poet possessed it. In "The King's Garments" occurs the famous lines:

For Law immutable hath one decree,  
'No deed of good, no deed of ill can die;  
All must ascend unto my loom and be  
Woven for man in lasting tapestry,  
Each soul his own.'

But I like better the careless dismissal, as of an account closed, with which she wills away the flesh in a poem called "His Clay":

The flesh that I wore chanced ever to be  
Less of my friend than my enemy.

So bury it deeply—strong foe, weak friend—  
And bury it cheaply—and there its end.

Of love of country this poet wrote in her

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own strange bright language. There was a day when lines like these met the casual gaze of readers of a Toronto newspaper:

If destiny is writ on night's dusk scroll,  
Then youngest stars are dropping from the hand  
Of the Creator, sowing on the sky  
My name in seeds of light. Ages will watch  
Those seeds expand to suns, such as the tree  
Bears on its boughs, which grow in Paradise.

No poet long maintains this plane of rapture. Shakespeare and Dante sustained it in repeated measures. Keats and Shelley in brief lyric songs, every real poet in certain magic lines. It is the last thought of the writer to compare the magic lines of this Canadian poet with those of any other, much less with the masters of English song. One can only stress the obvious fact that she did leave rare and beautiful snatches of poetry, marked by her own original imprint, which always bore a certain splendour rather akin to the clear colours of the Ontario landscape that she knew and loved.

In this anthology the collection has been chosen to show the remarkable versatility of the poet. Her sea songs are few and rarely quoted, hence "Good-Bye's the Word," which is as fresh as though written yesterday. "Be-



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tween the Wind and the Rain," "The Butterfly" (the original title of "The Mother's Soul"), "The Camp of Souls" and "Laughter," to mention only a few of the lyrics, take us worlds away one from the other, in concept and mood. It is interesting to compare the delightfully simple "Who Sees a Vision" and its opening couplet:

Who sees a vision bright and bold  
Hath found a treasure of pure gold,

with the much-quoted lines of the American poet, Anna Hempstead Branch, in "The Monk in the Kitchen" written nearly thirty years later :

Whoever makes a thing more bright  
He is an angel of all light.

The fact that the present writer happens to know that Miss Branch had never seen or heard of the work of the Canadian poet at the time she wrote makes the coincidence of considerable interest.

Lines from "Malcolm's Katie" cannot be omitted in any summary of the poet's output. Here one gets a vivid imagination at work on a foundation of actual experience. The life of the woods is the drama, with a somewhat insipid love-story used as a connecting link.



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In "Gisli the Chieftain," an old Norse Saga is converted into a narrative poem that for sheer dramatic imagery would have made the writer notable, had no other work been published. The pictures are superb—unforgettable. Gisli, the Chieftain, invokes the help of Lada, the goddess of spring and love, to give him a passionate human affection. His galleys seek the land of Brynhild and his spear the breast of her husband. The poem is written in four parts, entirely different one from another in movement and pattern. The first is the prayer to Lada. In the second the figure of Gisli emerges:

From harpings and sagas and mirth of the town  
Great Gisli, the Chieftain, strode merrily down.

His ruddy beard stretched in the loom of the wind,  
His shade like a dusky god striding behind.

As crests of the green bergs flame white in the sky  
The town on its sharp hill shone brightly and high.

In part three the quest of Gisli is the theme, and the flight of an eagle from his arrow is described:

Unfurled to the northward and southward  
His wings broke the air, and to eastward  
His breast gave its iron; and godward  
Pierced the shrill voice of his hunger.

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Bared were his great sides as he laboured  
Up the steep blue of the broad sky,  
His gaze on the fields of his freedom;  
To the gods spake the prayers of his gyres.

Bared were his vast sides as he glided,  
Black in the sharp blue of the north sky,  
Black over the white of the tall cliffs,  
Black over the arrow of Gisli.

Then comes the remarkable part four, depicting the soul of Gisli's victim which begins:

A ghost along the Hel Way sped;  
The Hel shoes shod his misty tread;  
A phantom hound beside him sped.

Beneath the spandrels of the Way  
Worlds rolled to night—from night to day;  
In Space's ocean suns were spray.

Grouped worlds, eternal eagles, flew;  
Swift comets fell like noiseless dew;  
Young earths slow budded in the blue.

The waves of Space, inscrutable,  
With awful pulses rose and fell,  
Silent and godly—terrible.

Perhaps no biographer can hope to summon very vividly a figure out of the near past. Those of a century ago seem strangely clear by comparison. And the most difficult test as to the quality of work lies in this matter of distance. I believe that this poet will stand the test—that Housman might have written of her:

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And when the bird with the voice of gold—  
Whether he sound the day or the night  
With his plummet of song—that bell-like tone  
Rings like the resurrection light!  
And up from the tomb, with its weight of stone  
Raises to life a heart once dead.  
At the voice of the bird, stone becomes bread  
Food for the living!

There is an ancient myth that poets thrive in poverty and neglect and that the tongues and pens of hostile critics are so much fuel to their flame. Witter Bynner, the American poet, has recently said "One had to be a poet indeed a quarter of a century ago to endure the attacking obloquy." Judging from the criticisms of the day, however, women, with the possible exception of Mrs. Browning, who had been bold enough to write "The Cry of the Children," a protest against juvenile labour in the factories and mines of England, were not even dignified by "attacking obloquy." They were merely "poetesses." Isabella Valancy Crawford was never a "poetess," and perhaps her work refutes the theory that to have great artists there must be great audiences. One of the robust race whom no circumstance, however untoward, can altogether quell, she goes singing on in lines that may, or may not, be better known to-morrow than they are to-day.

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A small trunk full of her manuscript stands before me as I write. Not, alas, of poems newly discovered, but of old stories, short stories and novelettes written out in her clear, delicate handwriting on paper now yellow with age. The trunk is crammed with them; there are hundreds of closely-written pages: themes carefully invented and in some cases cleverly carried out. A quotation, opening paragraphs from a short story of the French Revolution, called "*La Tricoteuse*," illustrates the quality of the prose, though it does not convince one that Miss Crawford's gift lay as richly in this direction as in poetry. But it is a beautiful rhythmic prose—another example that goes to strengthen the theory of many critics that while mastery in the technique of prose does not, as a general rule, effect the sheer-drawn fabric of poetry, something in the practice of the scales and exercises of poetry often reacts on a poet's prose, increasing its flexibility and colour.

Five years before the head of Louis rolled in the sawdust to a roulade of drums there was prophecy of tragedy in the kennels of Paris. But not then, or indeed until much later, was it felt in air perfumed from the Jessamine farms of Sorbraie that bordered the château of Monsieur le Comte Fabrian de St. Broie.

Here the peasants danced in scarlet camisoles and

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wooden shoes, in holiday blouses and barbaric earrings. The great dove-coloured oxen, turned adrift from the vintage wains, dozed half buried in the rich grass. The air was heavy as the hand of a genii with the odour of the Greek-born glory of the rose of Provence, the fine shafted incense of the jasmine from the neighbouring farms of Sorbraie sous Montagne and Sorbraie sur Montagne. The air was drowsy with the hum of golden bees, it was fanned by the gorgeous wings of butterflies, it was mellow with the sun of Provence, it was cool with silver dew. It was an air to expand dusky physical beauty, to ripen a certain sensuous genius, to make of labour a golden loitering in the sun. If poverty lolled on the peasant's threshold the sun gilded her. Morin might have painted her in glorious dyes amongst the dancing peasants on his rose du Barré vases of Sevres and her rags would have shone in gay splendours, her eyes would have laughed as well as wept. Poverty, where goat's milk cheeses, black bread and purple grapes were plentiful as gnats over a silver pool, was a different thing to poverty in the gutters of Paris, slinking from the cuffs of gilded lackeys and crooning the first mad music of the reign of terror, behind skeleton hands.

The wrapper in which this evidently returned manuscript was discovered bears a New York postmark. The editor or reader had not troubled to sort the pages. As I drew the folded, tangled mass from the old envelope the word "Finis" appeared at the bottom of the first page that met my eye. And just above this word was the concluding sentence of the story. It happened to be a quotation: "Hush, hush—thoughts are safest, like young birds, in the nest."



# BIBLIOGRAPHY

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### OLD SPOOKSES' PASS, MALCOLM'S KATIE AND OTHER POEMS

By Isabella Valancy Crawford. Toronto: James Bain & Son, 1884. Foolscap 8vo., blue-green paper boards, with title as above repeated in full on face, but with no lettering on back; pp. i-iv + 224, all edges trimmed; publishers' advertisement on under cover; slip of errata at p. 1.

According to Mr. Donald Bain, the "Son" of the firm of James Bain & Son, 1,000 copies of this book were printed for the author, but the book practically fell dead from the press, not more, perhaps, than fifty copies being actually sold. Miss Crawford finally took back the undisposed of copies, and in 1886 re-issued them in gray or blue paper boards, with a substituted title-page (repeated in full as before, on the face, but again with no lettering on the back), following the typography of the original title-page closely, but omitting the quotation marks which there accompanied the titles, "Old Spookses' Pass" and "Malcolm's Katie," and the publishers' imprint (including the date), but adding after the author's name: Author of "A Little Bacchante; or Some Black Sheep," and also retaining the copyright notice on the verso. In addition, the publishers' advertisement on the under side of the cover of the first issue was replaced by press notices of the volume from various Canadian and English newspapers and other publications, the latest of them being dated April 3, 1886. The slip of errata was also omitted, although the single error mentioned therein remained uncorrected.

Some copies of this second issue have the original title-page pasted down, in addition to

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carrying the substituted title-page, and therefore may be considered a separate issue; but whether they were the first put out by Miss Crawford in her capacity as vendor of her own book, or whether they were the last she put out, is an open question.

In 1898, a considerable store of unsold copies of what may be called the "author's edition" (although how many is not definitely known at this late date) was found and, after being rebound in light blue cloth boards, with lettering and floral design on the face in silver, and lettering on the back, also in silver, put on the market by William Briggs. There were thus, as will have been seen, three, if not four, different issues of this little volume, which, rare enough in any issue, is in its first issue one of the rarest and most desirable of Canadian books of verse. A small number (eight or ten) of this issue, it may be added, were bound *de luxe* in full leather.

### THE MAIL, TORONTO

"The Vesper Star," December 24, 1873; "Esther," March 7, 1874; "The Wishing Star," March 25, 1874; "Cæsar's Wife," April 27, 1874; "A Battle," June 26, 1874; "Canada to England," July 28, 1874; "The Roman Rose-Seller," August 19, 1874; "The Wooing of Gheezis: an Indian Idyll," September 18, 1874; "Moloch," November 6, 1874; "Flora," February 26, 1875; "An Interregnum," May 3, 1875.

The above poems were written and contributed while Miss Crawford lived in Peterboro', Ontario.

### THE FAVORITE

"The Inspiration of Song," "Love Amongst the Roses."

No record of "The Favorite" can be found at either the Reference or the Parliamentary Library, Toronto: but I have definite information that those poems appeared in a publication of that name.

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

### NATIONAL

"I'll Laugh to See the Year In," "La Blanchisseuse," "A Harvest Song," "Where, Love, Art Hid?"

The "National" was a weekly journal which began publication in Toronto in 1872, and discontinued in a few years. Only two issues of this journal can be found at the public libraries, and they do not contain any of Miss Crawford's poems. "Where, Love, Art Hid?" was written in Toronto, July, 1876.

### THE EVENING TELEGRAM, TORONTO

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### THE COLLECTED POEMS OF ISABELLA VALANCY CRAWFORD

Edited by J. W. Garvin, B.A., with introduction by Ethelwyn Wetherald. Toronto: William Briggs, 1905. Crown 8vo. cloth (also half calf), pp. 309, with portrait and facsimile poem.

### THE GLOBE,

Toronto, January 6, 1886, has this advertisement: "A new novel, written for *The Globe*, entitled 'The Little Bacchante; or Some Black Sheep,' by Isabella Valancy Crawford, author of 'Old Spookses' Pass,' 'Winona,' 'Hate,' 'Wrecked,' etc., etc., will shortly be commenced in these columns, and will be continued from day to day until completed." The leading features of the novel are then strongly praised. *The Varsity* of January 23, 1886, refers to this novel in these words: "The novel of Isabella Valancy Crawford, in the *Globe*, is vastly superior to the ordinary run of newspaper fiction." This novel appeared in *The Evening Globe* and not in the morning edition.

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With Poetical Selections for every day in the year from Canadian writers, English and French. [Compiled by] Seranus [Mrs. J. W. F. Harrison]. Toronto: C. Blackett Robinson, 1887.

Contains sixteen poems, or extracts from poems, of Miss Crawford, being the first Canadian anthology to contain work of hers. The compiler in index reference speaks of Miss Crawford's verse as being "almost the finest yet produced in Canada, being instinct with a breadth and vigour and melody unsurpassed (*sic*) by few living writers."

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Voices from the Forests and Waters, the Settlements and Cities of Canada. Selected and edited by William Douw Lighthall, M.A., Montreal. London: Walter Scott, 1889. Pp. xxvii and 450, with selections interspersed through the volume.

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